

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-22 (cancelled).

23 (currently amended). Oral pharmaceutical or dietary composition

comprising an active ingredient and a complex sugar and/or dietary fibre which is a soluble or water dispersible dietary fibre, said active ingredient consisting of at least one short-chain fatty acid or salt thereof, in which the ~~complex sugar and/or~~ soluble or water dispersible dietary fibre is selected from inulin, pectin, dextrin, maltodextrin or derivatives thereof and with one or more pharmacologically acceptable excipients, said composition comprising (a) a matrix consisting of lipophilic compounds with a melting point lower than 90°C and optionally amphiphilic compounds in which the active ingredient ~~are~~is at least partially incorporated, (b) an amphiphilic matrix; and (c) an outer hydrophilic matrix in which the lipophilic matrix and the amphiphilic matrix are dispersed.

24 (previously presented). Composition according to claim 23 in which the short-chain fatty acid is a linear or branched C₁-C₅ monocarboxylic organic acid.

25 (previously presented). Composition according to claim 23 in which the short-chain fatty acid is selected from acetic acid, propionic acid, butyric acid, and isovaleric acid.

26 (currently amended). Composition according to claim 25 in which the short-chain fatty acid is butyric acid or a salt thereof.

27 (previously presented). Composition according to claim 23 in which a quantity of from 5 to 50% by weight of the short-chain fatty acid is included.

28 (previously presented). Composition according to claim 27 in which a quantity of from 10 to 30% by weight of the short-chain fatty acid is included.

29 (currently amended). Composition according to claim 23 in which a quantity of from 5 to 50% by weight of the soluble or water dispersible dietary fibre is included.

30 (currently amended). Composition according to claim 29 in which a quantity of from 10 to 30% by weight of the soluble or water dispersible dietary fibre is included.

31 (previously presented). Oral pharmaceutical or dietary composition according to claim 23 in a form selected from the group consisting of tablet, capsule, granule and micro-granule.

32 (previously presented). Oral pharmaceutical or dietary composition according to claim 23, wherein it is an intestinal controlled-release composition.

33 (previously presented). Oral pharmaceutical or dietary composition according to claim 23, containing a gastro-resistant coating.

34-44 (canceled).

45 (previously presented). Composition according to claim 23 further comprising (d) other excipients.

46 (previously presented). Composition according to claim 25 in which the short-chain fatty acid is butyric acid.

47 (new). Composition according to claim 23, which releases directly into the colon.

48 (new). Composition according to claim 23 in which the dietary fibre is inulin.

49 (new). Composition according to claim 26 in which the salt is selected from the group consisting of calcium butyrate, sodium butyrate and magnesium butyrate.

50 (new). Composition according to claim 26 in which the salt is calcium butyrate.